

ANNUAL REPORT
2018/19



**Shaping
Sustainable
Urban Development**

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MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

2018/19

turns a new page for the global efforts in combating climate change, with many countries around the world declaring climate change an emergency. Meanwhile, a global youth movement has been ignited, demanding the attention of those in power to pay more attention to an issue that is deemed to be an absolute priority for the next generation. Civic Exchange embarked on a joint research project with the World Resources Institute, "Hong Kong 2050 is Now". The project aims to produce thorough fact-based research alongside well-balanced recommendations, hopefully to galvanise interest in our society to collectively envision how Hong Kong could transition into a low-carbon economy. Through in-depth research and stakeholder engagement, we aim to develop a decarbonisation roadmap for Hong Kong, and support our city in contributing to China's nationally determined commitments to the Paris Agreement.

Additionally, we launched projects that explored policy improvement areas in water management and sustainable transport. Building on our longstanding history in researching local water security, we completed a two-part research project on "Modernising Hong Kong's Water Management Policy" in the past year, one on water conservation and consumption and the other on sustainable water infrastructure. The reports have come at an opportune time, as the Water Supplies Department of the HKSAR government has been increasing its attention to water conservation initiatives, and will be renegotiating the Dongjiang water purchase agreement with Guangdong authorities in 2020.

In sustainable transport, we participated in facilitation of views on the implementation of the electronic road pricing scheme and started a research project examining "Pathways to Transition to Zero Emission Land Transport in Hong Kong".

The past year has been one of the most challenging times for Hong Kong since the handover in 1997 across social, political, as well as economic spectrums. This upsurge of civic movements reminds us of the founding values of Civic Exchange – that we should not shy away from deliberating what might seem to be unpopular or controversial issues, but they should be deliberated through an inclusive process backed by sound facts and research. Only then could we galvanise the society to come together to generate pragmatic and innovative ideas to address major issues facing Hong Kong. Civic Exchange continues to see opportunities in reflecting on how we can continue to help strengthen the city's social and environmental resilience.

The coming year will be Civic Exchange's 20th anniversary. Over the past two decades, we have been producing in-depth, evidence-based research to shape public policy. We strive to continue producing high-quality public policy research that informs public policy makers in shaping Hong Kong into a better and more sustainable city.

Yours faithfully,

Evan Auyang
Chairman

Highlights of the Year

6 RESEARCH PUBLICATIONS



20 CIVIL SOCIETY ENGAGEMENTS



INTERACTIONS ON SOCIAL MEDIA*:
*including reactions, comments & shares to our social media posts

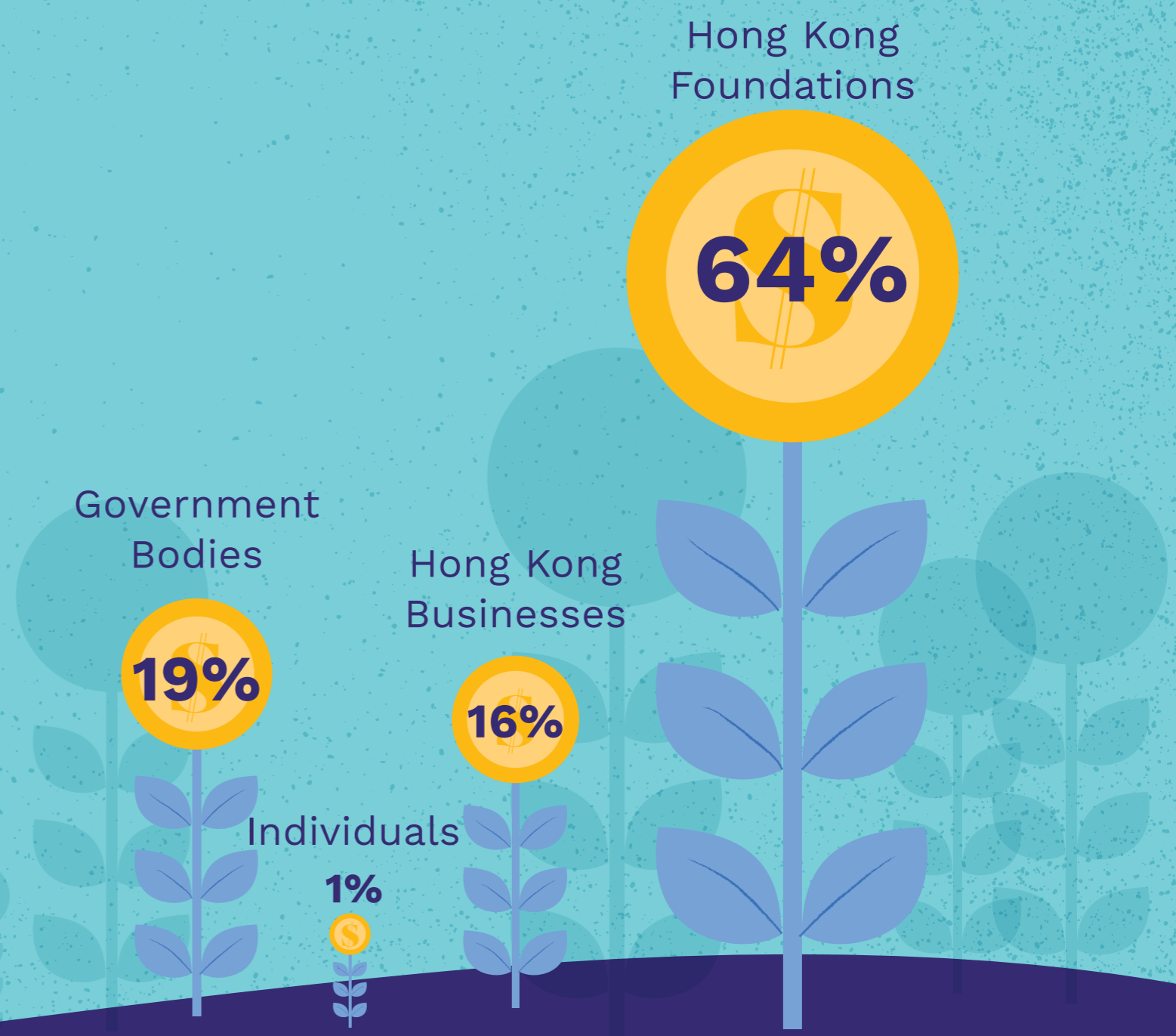
77,000

Weekly MENTION IN THE NEWS ON AVERAGE



Funding directed towards research, engagement & capacity building

Total* HK\$7.25 million



* This overview covers donation delivered and committed to Civic Exchange by funders during the year.

RESEARCH

MODERNISING HONG KONG'S WATER MANAGEMENT POLICY PART I & II

Hong Kong faces increasing pressures on its fresh water supply due to population and economic growth as well as competition for water resources in the Pearl River Delta region. It has become increasingly important for Hong Kong to scrutinise its water usage to conserve this scarce resource responsibly. Civic Exchange addresses Hong Kong's inefficient water usage through the lens of water demand and supply in the two-part Modernising Hong Kong's Water Management Policy.

PART I CONSERVATION AND CONSUMPTION: TOWARDS A WATER-SMART HONG KONG

This first part focuses on the consumption, investigating methods that can effectively minimise wastage, lower local demand and inspire more mindful attitudes and practices amongst Hong Kong citizens. Hong Kong's local daily per capita water consumption doubled the world average, standing at 220 litres per person per day. The report identifies four main factors that contributed to Hong Kong's high levels of water consumption, further suggesting seven recommendations for improvement spanning policy, technology and education.

- **Launched in June 2019**
- **Funded by WYNG Foundation**

Factors Contributing to Hong Kong's Overconsumption of Water

Low Water Prices

Pricing rate structures are frequently used as conservation tools. Our research identified that one of the factors behind Hong Kong's overconsumption of water is the low water prices that do not accurately reflect the true cost of water and a lenient tariff structure that is unable to realise the user-pays principle.

Lack of Data and Ambitions

The lack of systematic data granularity leads to an inability to monitor, address and prevent water losses. The Water Efficiency Labelling Scheme (WELS) introduced in 2009 is only a voluntary scheme and conservation thresholds for efficiency are far lower than in other cities.

Pipe Leakages

Hong Kong lost large quantities of freshwater due to pipe leakages with leakage rate at 15.2% in 2018. As an illustration of the magnitude of this unnecessary water wastage, the amount of water lost each year could meet the water demand of 2 million people in Hong Kong and save approximately HK\$530 million.

In March 2019, we conducted an online public opinion survey to sample public attitudes on Hong Kong's urban water usage to shed light on potential policy recommendations. A total of 420 respondents fully or partially completed the online survey. Survey results were announced through a six-post series of social media campaign to raise public awareness on water issues.

Key Policy Recommendations

Restructure Water Pricing

The government should reevaluate its tariff scheme to revive the user-pays principle, as the thresholds of each tier now are based on the average household size in public housing in 1995, which has now decreased by over 25%, revealing that the thresholds are now too relaxed. Billing cycle should also be shortened, so that users would receive their water bills more often, and be reminded of the impact of their water use.

More Ambitious Targets

The government has an official target to reduce pipe leakage rate to less than 10% by 2030, but we would recommend the government to set a more ambitious benchmark of 8% leakage rate – which still means losing the amount of water that would meet the needs of close to half a million people. A more rigorous reduction target on water consumption should also be set.

Invest in Technology

Hong Kong should invest in infrastructure that accurately identifies leakages and has the capacity to shut off water flow remotely. The government should also install smart water meters to automatically collect water consumption data of individual customers as timely water usage data may encourage the consumer to decrease water consumption.

Fiscal Measures as Carrots and Sticks

The government could mandate certain restrictions on water use and create incentives to use water conservation as a commercial selling point. The government could also provide expertise and allocate funds to support projects focusing on improving water resilience and efficient water use.

Water Saving Devices

Thresholds of WELS tiers could be strengthened, as the strictest WELS tier used by WSD to indicate water savings matches only the weakest tier in other cities. Furthermore, the government can promote wider use of water saving devices and support in the supply and application of these devices; for examples, all residents should be encouraged to apply flow controllers to their faucets.

Education Programmes and School Initiatives

Education programmes could boost the potential success of flow controller usage in terms of their adoption and customer satisfaction. School education kits could be used to enhance the learning experience and bridge the gap between classrooms and practical water saving.

Robust and Transparent Data on Water Use

Residents should receive composite information on water usage and be able to compare their water use with their neighbours, building, estate or even district. Anonymity should be preserved but these may provide useful benchmarks for their use.

IN THE PIPELINE



Managing Vibrant Streets:
Street Performance
Policy in Hong Kong

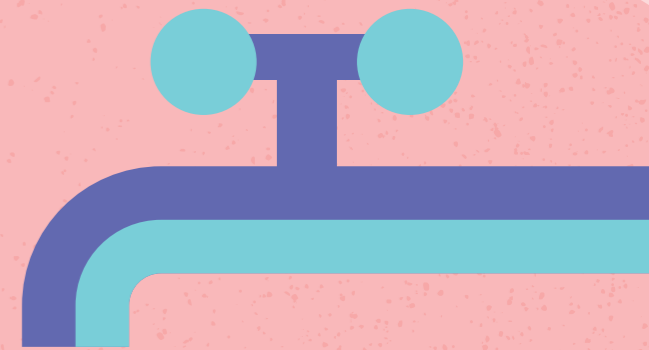


2050

Hong Kong 2050 is Now:
Phase 2



Pathways to Zero Emission
Land Transport in Hong Kong



Engaging the Public



to Conserve Water



IN THE PIPELINE

HONG KONG 2050 IS NOW

In 2019, Civic Exchange, World Resources Institute, ADM Capital Foundation and RS Group teamed up to facilitate the creation of a non-government, independent initiative called Hong Kong 2050 is Now that seeks to galvanise action on Hong Kong's transition towards carbon neutrality.

The initiative aims to align diverse Hong Kong climate action, from policy to education to media and community engagement, all underpinned by sound evidence-based research. Our work in this first year of a multi-year project began with data collection, analysis and scenario modelling.

Policy change must be achieved with community support; hence in parallel, we are working to develop a broad platform to educate and inform Hong Kong about climate change, as it relates directly to our lives.

This web-based platform includes direct outreach to varied communities, social media outreach, visualisations about how we would live in a decarbonised Hong Kong and what that would mean in terms of a better quality of life.

This platform will also cover Scope 3 emissions given that in Hong Kong, as an island importer, we are over-consumers of everything, from travel to food, water and clothing. Indeed, public education is a critical component of how we intend to build Hong Kong 2050 is Now, which would lead to a broader understanding of the issues and form the basis for action.

In the first year of Hong Kong 2050 is Now, the highlights of our achievements include:

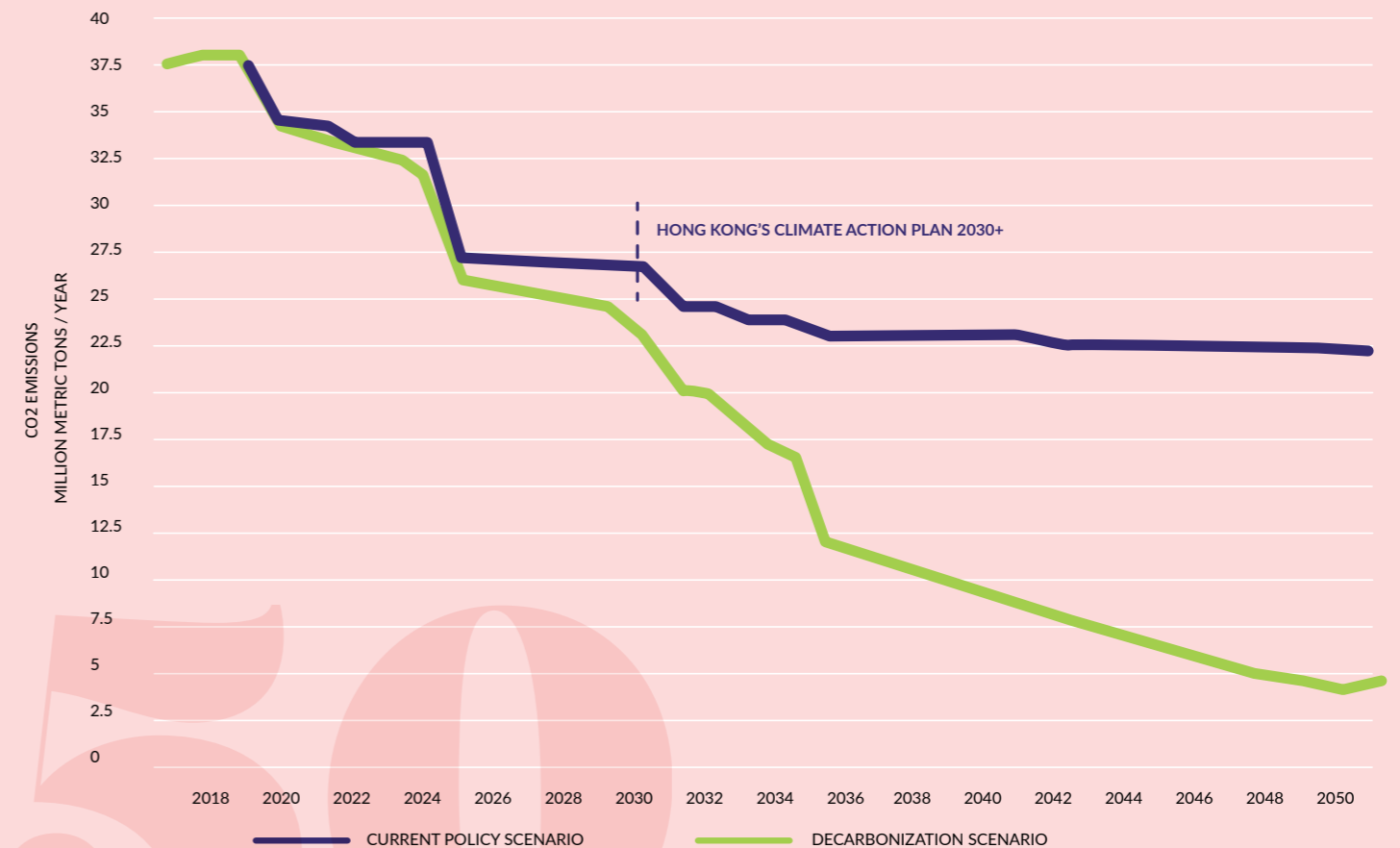
Using an Energy Policy Simulator (EPS), we conducted a modelling exercise to analyse the emissions scenarios for Hong Kong to reach net-zero emissions by 2050. The model is now available online. We will publish a technical note in 2020 that explains the methodological details of it.

HONG KONG 2050 IS NOW

Based on the below model, policy reviews and a series of stakeholder consultations, we are currently preparing a 2050 roadmap report to inform the government and other stakeholders on the possible options for Hong Kong to achieve zero emission by 2050. This includes policy recommendations, technology roadmaps and economic analyses for an economy-wide zero emission transition.

Using the above model and a homegrown policy concept model (PCM) to create decarbonisation scenarios, we provided our feedback memo to Council for Sustainable Development (SDC)'s Hong Kong Long Term Decarbonisation Strategy. We also convened eight workshops with local stakeholders to mobilise broad support to infuse greater ambition into the SDC process with consistent messages based on the above study.

Complementing all of the above actions, we created an online platform www.hk2050isnow.org and organised seven workshops to secure buy-in from the broader community with a focus on specific topics. Eventually, we will mobilise these area experts to drive the societal change needed to transition to a zero emission Hong Kong by 2050.



SUBMISSIONS

Civic Exchange reiterated our stance in adopting recycled water in the local water supply, the implementation of better transport policies to improve accessibility, and the role Hong

Kong can play in China's national contribution under the Paris Agreement, all of which echo with the findings of our past and ongoing research.

December 2018

In response to the public consultation of the Development Bureau and Water Supplies Department, we submitted **"Supply of Recycled Water in Hong Kong"** to urge the government in developing a holistic water strategy with long-term vision and aspirational goals, by adopting recycled water for wider use.

August 2019

Civic Exchange submitted our **"Response to the Study on Enhancing Walkability in Hong Kong"** to express our views for the public engagement of the Transport Department's study on enhancing walkability in Hong Kong.



2019

2018

2020



May 2019

Ahead of a full council meeting of the Central and Western District Council covering the Electronic Road Pricing Pilot Scheme in Hong Kong, Civic Exchange submitted our **"Position Paper on the Electronic Road Pricing Pilot Scheme"**, hoping to see progress in the 30 year-long discussions of ERP finally.

September 2019

Civic Exchange's **"Response to Long-term Decarbonisation Strategy Public Engagement"** kicked off our climate action project, **Hong Kong 2050 is Now**, by outlining policy recommendations on mobilising towards a net-zero emissions goal, particularly in the aspects of energy, mobility and lifestyle, in response to the Council for Sustainable Development's public engagement on Long-term Decarbonisation Strategy.



CIVIL SOCIETY ENGAGEMENTS

When conducting in-depth policy research, Civic Exchange firmly believes in engaging stakeholders in dialogue. As such, Civic Exchange held 20 civil society engagements in the past year across our wide range of research focuses to inform policy change in Hong Kong and share research findings with relevant parties.

21 January 2019

Post-COP24 Hong Kong Forum: Implications for Hong Kong's Long-Term Decarbonization Strategy

Co-hosted by Civic Exchange, Institute for the Environment of HKUST, HKUST Business School and the Business Environment Council, 143 participants from the government, academia and business sector attended the forum to learn about the Hong Kong government's actions following COP24 as well as what business leaders can do.

As the Hong Kong 2050 is Now team pioneered the project, a series of research engagement was held this year with some 35 experts across academia, private and public sectors, to have a basic understanding of possible alternatives for Hong Kong to head towards a net zero emissions pathway in key sectors before delving into the research.

- Electricity generation from all energy sources (Jan 2019)
- The use of distributed gas (Jan 2019)
- Improving Hong Kong's carbon emissions in building energy efficiency (Mar 2019)
- Improving Hong Kong's carbon emissions in mobility (Mar 2019)
- Improving Hong Kong's carbon emissions in waste (Mar 2019)
- Improving Hong Kong's carbon emissions associated with lifestyle (Mar 2019)
- Carbon pricing in Hong Kong (Mar 2019)



Hong Kong 2050 is Now roundtable meeting on carbon pricing in Hong Kong held in March 2019.

27 May 2019

Breakfast seminar on “Mangrove’s role in climate change mitigation and adaptation”

Civic Exchange shared research findings with 17 participants from the government, academia and public sector at a breakfast seminar on mangrove's role in climate action.

Climate Change



19 July 2019

Workshop to Collaborate on Hong Kong Climate Emergency

Civic Exchange exchanged views with over 30 stakeholders on the initial findings of the Hong Kong 2050 is Now decarbonisation research and explored potential collaboration for the Hong Kong 2050 is Now platform.

30 April 2019

Roundtable meeting on Electronic Road Pricing in Hong Kong

10 experts from the government, academia and business sector jointly discussed how we might promote movement of people and goods, what tools should be put in place to achieve this and make Hong Kong a more liveable city, as well as what important attributes we should take note of in the design of a successful ERP system.



Mobility & Urban



20 May 2019

Roundtable meeting on Electronic Road Pricing and Walkability in Hong Kong

8 Civic Exchange Walkability Experts and academics were engaged to discuss how the government should foster a pedestrian-friendly environment for people to commute, connect and enjoy in Central, such as by implementing ERP to complement walkability enhancement.

29 July 2019

PICO Policy Workshop on Open Space

At one of four policy workshops organised by the Policy Innovation and Co-ordination Office (PICO) of the HKSAR government, Civic Exchange shared research findings on the usage of open space by citizens and suggested policy recommendations to improve the planning and quality of open space with government representatives. These representatives were from the Development Bureau, Home Affairs Bureau, Planning Department, Leisure and Cultural Services Department, Buildings Department and PICO.



Water Security

14 November 2018

Roundtable meeting on the supply of recycled water

Representatives from the Water Supplies Department, Drainage Services Department, the Hong Kong Green Building Council and academic experts, provided in-depth feedback on the supply of recycled water to inform policy change.



6 June 2019

Launch of “Modernising Hong Kong’s Water Management Policy Part I: Conservation and Consumption: Towards a Water-Smart Hong Kong”

Civic Exchange launched the first part of the two-part research project, “Modernising Hong Kong’s Water Management Policy”, and shared research findings with reporters.

10 September 2019

“Towards a Water-Smart Hong Kong” Luncheon

Civic Exchange shared findings of “Modernising Hong Kong’s Water Management Policy Part I: Conservation and Consumption: Towards a Water-Smart Hong Kong” at a luncheon co-hosted by the American Chamber of Commerce in Hong Kong Environment & Sustainability Committee, The British Chamber of Commerce and Business Environment Council.



17 December 2019

Launch of “Modernising Hong Kong’s Water Management Policy Part II: Sustainable Water Infrastructure: Towards a Diversified Water Supply”

Civic Exchange launched the second part of the two-part research project, “Modernising Hong Kong’s Water Management Policy”, and shared research findings with reporters.



Wellbeing & Social

16 November 2019

Ways Forward Forum: Let's Talk & Listen Public Forum

Civic Exchange supported the organising committee on a pro bono basis in the design and delivery of the Ways Forward Forum, particularly in the planning and management of the rundown, speaker coordination and recruitment, briefing and management of over 30 facilitators and 20 helpers. The forum invited peacebuilding experts from Hong Kong and overseas to share with the audience their experiences, aiming to provide an international perspective on peace and reconciliation to help Hong Kong break the deadlock initiated by the extradition-bill controversy. Over 500 participated across the social spectrum.



Waste

31 October 2018

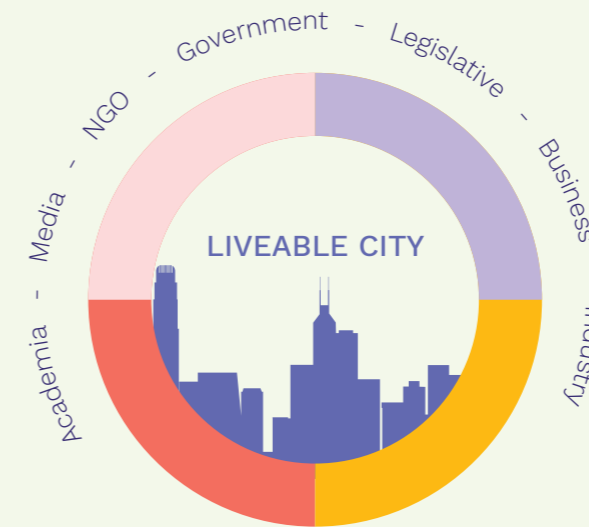
Roundtable meeting on waste management

Key stakeholders, including major property owners in Central, the government and academic representatives were engaged to explore district-based collaboration and inspire systemic change in waste management.

ABOUT CIVIC EXCHANGE

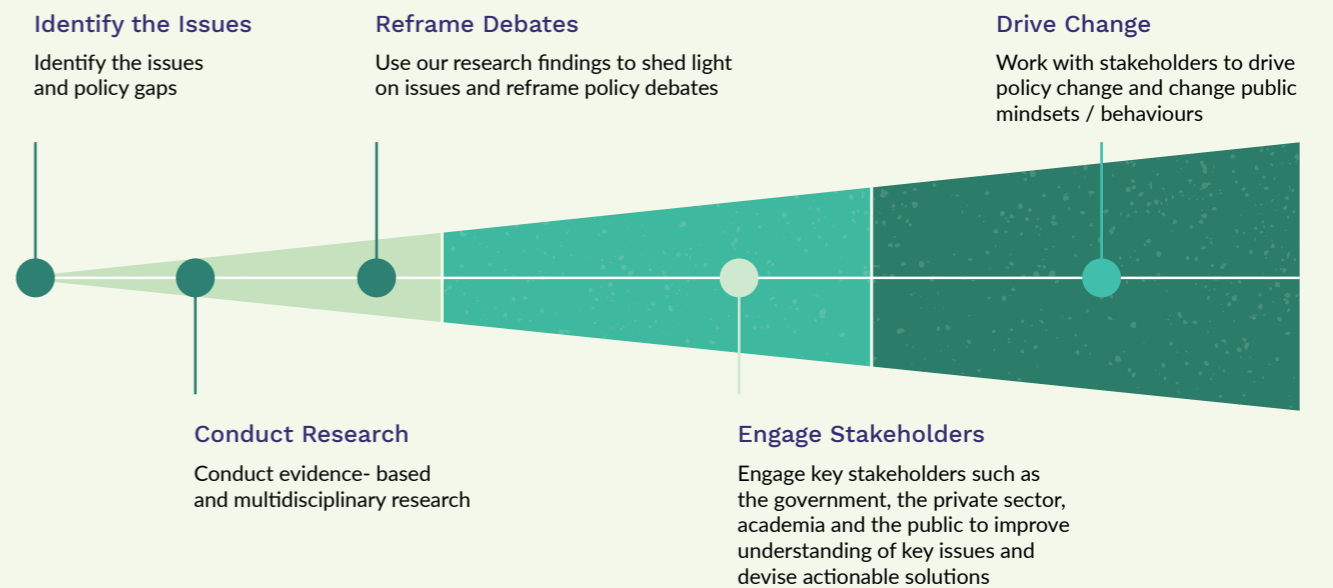
Civic Exchange is an independent Hong Kong public policy think tank established in 2000. We use in-depth research and inclusive dialogue to inform policy design and engage stakeholders in addressing environmental and development challenges in Hong Kong.

Our research covers four areas that make up a liveable city: environmental, economic, social, and governance. Civic Exchange has been ranked among the top 50 environmental think tanks in the world by the Lauder Institute at the University of Pennsylvania since 2011.



ENVIRONMENTAL ECONOMIC GOVERNANCE SOCIAL

How we operate



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- Dr Frederick LEE
- Simon NG^
- Yan-Yan YIP

* Resigned on 2 October 2018
 ** Resigned on 14 June 2019
 ^ Resigned on 1 November 2018

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- River Star Foundation
- Sabrina Lai-Ming Charitable Foundation
- Transport Planning and Research Institute, Ministry of Transport of the People's Republic of China
- WYNG Foundation
- Yvonne Law

Collaborating Organisations and Individuals

- ADM Capital Foundation
- Arup
- Business Environment Council Limited
- Carbon Care Asia
- Centre for Civil Society and Governance, the University of Hong Kong
- Centre for Water Technology and Policy, the University of Hong Kong
- China Water Risk
- Chiu Ying Lam
- Clean Air Network
- CLP Group
- Deloitte China
- Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology
- Department of Civil Engineering, the University of Hong Kong
- Department of Geography and Resource Management, the Chinese University of Hong Kong
- Designing Hong Kong
- Division of Environment and Sustainability, the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology
- Drainage Services Department, Government of the HKSAR
- Environmental Protection Department, Government of the HKSAR
- European Union Office to Hong Kong and Macao
- Extinction Rebellion Hong Kong
- Faculty of Architecture, the University of Hong Kong
- Faculty of Business and Economics, the University of Hong Kong
- Gerson Lehman Group
- Green Mobility Innovations Limited
- HK Electric Investments Limited
- Hogan Lovells
- Hong Kong Automobile Association
- Hong Kong Green Building Council Limited
- Hong Kong Green Finance Association
- Hong Kong Productivity Council
- Institute for the Environment, the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology
- King Man Tsang
- Lalamove
- Masterplan Limited
- National Center for Climate Change Strategy and International Cooperation
- Nick Leach
- PIE Strategy
- Policy Innovation and Co-ordination Office, Government of the HKSAR
- RECAS Group
- Robert Footman
- RS Group
- Scania
- The Green Earth
- The Hong Kong and China Gas Company Limited - Towngas
- The Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation Limited
- The Lantau Group
- The Nature Conservancy
- Trans-Consult Asia
- Transport Department, Government of the HKSAR
- Walk DVRC
- Water Supplies Department, Government of the HKSAR
- Wing Tat Hung
- World Resources Institute
- WYNG Foundation

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Shaping Sustainable Urban Development



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